

2/22/2017

The Honorable Jeff Reardon, Chair
House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce
900 Court St NE, Room 431
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 2782 – Full Funding of OSU-Cascades Expansion

Chair Reardon and Committee Members:

It is my absolute pleasure to write this letter in support of the Oregon State University (OSU) Cascades campus expansion. I believe that the continued funding commitment from the State of Oregon to grow the four-year university in Central Oregon will greatly benefit the local community and enhance the quality of our workforce. As the co-founder of a local manufacturing company (named Oregon's 2016 fastest growing private company by the Portland Business Journal), the quality and technical aptitude of the local workforce is paramount to our continued success.

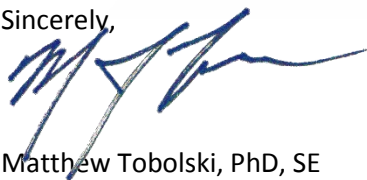
Within our organization, we rely heavily on educated and skilled workers in product development, design, testing and manufacturing. Since establishing our company factory in Redmond, OR in 2014, we have been fortunate to become tied to OSU Cascades engineering programs through hiring of interns and permanent employees. The continued growth of the campus is essential to the expansion of their degree program offerings and in turn the development of a qualified local workforce to help excel our company to the next level. Our company is only as good as the team that is supporting it and we look forward to continued growth at OSU Cascades to facilitate an educated local workforce to join us.

Beyond the local workforce development and its impact on our staffing, I am highly optimistic that the growth of OSU Cascades will bring with it additional engineering programs and opportunities to collaborate in research and product development. I was fortunate to earn my doctorate from the University of California San Diego and see firsthand the economic impacts when a university focuses on collaboration with private businesses (i.e. the San Diego biotech scene). I am hopeful that with the commitment from the State and University, Central Oregon can benefit from such a collaborative model and reap the economic development benefits.

In closing, universities are essential in the development of individuals armed with the skills needed to be successful in the 21st century. As Central Oregon grows, it is important to focus on the development of a sustainable and diverse local economy and the quality and training of our workforce is essential in that goal. The continued expansion of OSU Cascades will help provide the skilled workforce we need to be successful, as well as help bolster our local economy and help strengthen our business community.

I wholeheartedly support the OSU Cascades expansion and welcome any questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Matthew Tobolski, PhD, SE
President

